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MATRIX 38

OCT.-NOV. '81



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The BSFA Newsletter

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HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY ROUND MATRIX

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please address queries to Keith Freeman.

OLD TIMES REVISITED ?

JOHN HARVEY

"Hello, the bloody Harveys are back; thought we'd got rid of them to the back room."

Well, we are back, albeit very temporarily however. As Alan says below, Graham has been dashing across the Atlantic "like a mandarin" recently. Thus, without a "little" assistance, this MATRIX wouldn't be in your hands now. Eve's lightning typing has made Kev Smith's typewriter have a nervous breakdown and at last I've managed to get my hands on some paste-up work for a lithoed magazine.

Of course the standard Harvey typos are with us. See the first paragraph of Jim Darroch's review of 'Heavy Metal' on page 12 where he says 'the best animated film for donkeys.' I think we forgot the 'years' tacked onto the end of the sentence - makes a difference, eh? Talking of typos, that's one word Steve Green missed out of his Fanspeak item - but I don't need to define it now, do I?

Although Graham did manage to get the present contents to us, he didn't have time to sort out the letters, so I'm afraid this issue is devoid of your correspondence. However, all is not lost and I'm sure M39 will have a bumper collection of letters, so keep writing. The news is also truncated through last minute rushes and this too will be rectified for M39. Perhaps you'd better start ordering the concrete reinforcements for your doormat in readiness for the next mailing?

So that's it for our brief return. Eve and I will slink off to the 'Print Shop' and let Graham have his editor's chair back.

★★★★★★★

a day in the life

ALAN DOREY

This, as you will have noticed is a different issue of Matrix. Graham has had to suddenly depart for the United States on urgent business, but very nobly managed to put most of this issue together before going. And this was in the middle of a three-week management course for his firm! Well done, boss. I've quite a lot of news this month, plus one or two bits of seasonal propaganda, so I'd better dive straight into it:

FOCUS LIVES! Hardly surprising really, but at the last committee meeting, we felt that there was an overwhelming amount of support for it to be revived, and this has now been done. The new editors will be Dave Swinden, Allan Sutherland and Chris Bailey. I went down to sunny Sydenham in South London, home of Chris Bailey, with printing supremo John Harvey to survey their plans. They've got some good ideas and deserve your fullest support. The "new" Focus will be printed the same way as Vector on a twice-yearly basis, and the first issue (really number 5) will appear in February 1982. The bonus is, that it'll appear in addition to Vector, so you'll be getting TWO extra magazines for your subscription - a subscription rate that has been at £6 for over two years now, despite inflation, two postal increases and ALL litho-production of Matrix.

Chris, Dave and Allan are already at work on Focus, and I'm sure that they'd like submissions of suitable material in the near future. An announcement from them will follow.

PROFESSIONAL SF MAGAZINE! This is really the most interesting piece of news that's happened in a long time, and by the time you read this, you'll have probably already seen the flyer and Vector adverts for INTERZONE, the new British SF and Speculative Fiction magazine. The first issue is due to appear in February 1982, and will appear thereafter on a quarterly basis. Edited by a collective of respected SF critics and fans, it hopes to fill an important gap in the British market. The best part about it though, is that the BSFA is involved. By advertising it, and assisting with distribution, we will be getting a certain degree of publicity within its pages, and a discounted price for BSFA subscribers has been negotiated. And just to see that all's fair, I'm now part of the seven strong editorial committee.

Submissions to the magazine have already generated a tremendous amount of enthusiasm amongst us, and I feel certain that this is an opportunity that no self-respecting BSFA member can afford to miss. For just £4, you can take out an annual subscription, which also qualifies you for the one-off special booklet featuring a new J G Ballard novella. The flyer enclosed with this mailing tells you more about the offer, and how to subscribe, whilst VECTOR goes into greater detail about why this magazine is being produced.

To my mind, this magazine is what part of being a BSFA member is all about. The Articles of Association state that the BSFA is in existence to promote Science Fiction as a literary medium, and this magazine will fulfill that task admirably. When I was originally elected Chairman back in 1979, this was one of my strongest aims, and I'm very pleased to see it happening now.

The magazine is being funded by money donated from the surplus made by YORCON II, the 1981 British Easter SF convention. The convention (of which I was one of the organisers) has made donations to TAFF and Guff, those worthy fan funds, and was then left with a "profit" and nothing sensible to do with it. INTERZONE seems a fine idea, and generally, the people I've talked to about it regard this move as being in the very best interests of everyone connected with Science Fiction in this country. Conventions don't usually make profits, and indeed, never aim to. INTERZONE too, is going to be entirely non-profit making, so that the best quality material can

be bought and readers and writers alike can benefit. Much more will be said about INTERZONE in the forthcoming months, but I do urge you to take out subscriptions now, and secure yourself a share in one of the boldest publishing ventures of recent years.

HAMMERSMITH MEETINGS.....These are still running on the third Friday of every month at the Rutland Hotel, Hammersmith. I really must apologise on behalf of the Rutland and the BSFA for the problems at the September meeting. The pub "inadvertently" had us booked in for the wrong day, so the BSFA Film Show, together with Jim Barker's "Captive Play" had to be postponed. Further details are contained on a flyer with this mailing, but I can announce that in November, on Friday 20th, we have ANGELA CARTER as the special guest, surely an evening which many of you'll want to come along to. Angela Carter's works encompass such pieces as The Passion of New Eve, The Magic Toyshop, Heroes and Villains and The Bloody Chamber. Then in December, on Friday 18th, we're having the first BSFA CHRISTMAS PARTY! With food, drink and one or two other surprises, we sincerely hope that this will be just the start of a regular event. Several guest authors should be in attendance, we'll have a private bar, and we'll be providing a buffet. The cost of this event, which should start hitting the road at about 8 p.m., will be £1. Advance bookings would be preferable (so we can gauge the attendance and thus the food), although you'll be welcome to turn up on the night. Cheques, postal orders etc should be made out to BSFA Ltd, and sent (together with the number of tickets required) to:

Rochelle Dorey, 64 Hartford Avenue, Kenton, HARROW, Middx, HA3 8SY

If you've any distance to travel, and are uncertain about making it home, please let Rochelle know, and she'll try and sort out somewhere to stay. I'm looking forward to it - hope you will be too.

FOUNDATION SAVED! That's the next piece of good news. Colin Greenland, Fellow in Creative Writing at the Science Fiction Foundation has been told that his post will be renewed after all for the next academic year. Colin tells me that the amount of support for his continuance, and the complaints to the Polytechnic have proved successful. I'd just like to add all my sincerest thanks for everyone who felt the need to write to the Poly following my appeal in the last issue. Thank you all.....until next year?

VECTOR.....As you should have notice by now, Kev Smith has decided to stand down as Vector editor after the next two issues. The work has been taking up more and more of his time, and he's felt the desire to move onto other things. He will, of course, continue to act as our Company Secretary, but I would like you to recognise the great debt that you owe him for the revitalising job he's done on the magazine. Kev took over for issue 99, and has improved the look and layout, plus the circulation, and has succeeded in setting an exemplary critical standard. I warmly congratulate him on a superb effort, and after having helped put together three issues in late 1979, I know just what a tough job it is.

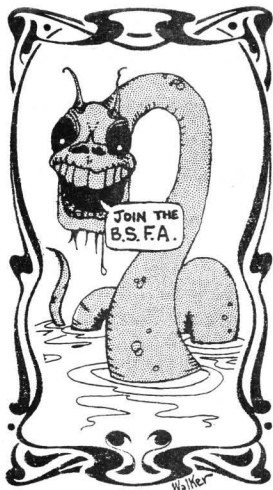
Now, as Kevin has said in the current VECTOR, the new editor will be required to take over with effect from the issue due in April 1982. The new editor will be expected to work within existing frameworks (i.e. Paul Kincaid as Features Editor and Joseph Nicholas as reviews editor) and will need to produce finished camera-ready copy (on time!) every two months. It's a tough job, but also a very rewarding one. If you think you've got what it takes, together with the necessary qualities, please, please, write to me and let me know. It's essential that we decide who the new editor's going to be before the new year so that he or she has sufficient opportunity to get into the swing of things and prepare for the changeover. Write to me, with any information about yourself that you think we on the BSFA committee will need to consider, at:

Alan Dorey, 64 Hartford Avenue, Kenton, HARROW, Midds, HA3 8SY

Well, that's about it from me this issue. We've one or two things planned for the new year which I'm sure you'll all be waiting to discover, and we have a special surprise FREE GIFT going out with the December mailing, so if you've got to renew this time round, why not give yourself an early Christmas present, or at least enough paper to keep the draughts out of those ill-fitting doors of yours. Until the next issue.....Best wishes.

PS. Don't forget the first of the BSFA BIBLIOGRAPHIES, featuring Bob Shaw, being published in the very near future. At just 60p to members (plus post and packing), they represent excellent value. See the advert elsewhere in this mailing.





FOCUS Lives!

Dave Swinden
Chris Bailey
Allan Sutherland

At a recent BSFA committee meeting it was decided that FOCUS should continue and the responsibility for editing it was placed in the hands of us, Dave Swinden, Chris Bailey and Allan Sutherland. It is intended that FOCUS should appear every six months, commencing with the February 1982 mailing, and as Kevin Smith has indicated his willingness to continue with the bi-monthly schedule for VECTOR, its re-emergence should be a bonus for members and need not annoy those who have little interest in the ground which it covers.

Physically, FOCUS 5 will not resemble its predecessors; the earnest hope is that it will turn out looking something like VECTOR. The reasons for this are primarily financial, as issues 1-4 were printed privately and this put

an undue strain on the BSFA's resources.

Content? To judge from the selection of letters which appeared in MATRIX 37 everybody wanted more of the same and yet they also wanted more concerning their own especial interests, be those fiction, artwork or insights into the domestic habits of famous writers. The content will of course ultimately depend upon what you send us and upon what we can solicit from those in the writing profession, but our aims include a modest increase in the amount of fiction so that it occupies, say, fifty per cent of the magazine.

The previous issues will give you some idea of the quality that is required in the fiction department. Doubts have been expressed as to whether we will be able to find an increased amount of such material (or better!) - once again, the ball is in your court. It will naturally be our responsibility to ensure that, given the aim of increasing the fiction content, we do not resort to printing drivel in the pursuit of achieving a theoretical target. However, from issue 6 onwards we would like the letters column to feature a fair amount of feedback and comment in general on the stories, so should any piece of dubious distinction slip through the net, we will stand reproved. We feel that as FOCUS provides a guaranteed circulation for unpublished writers, it is only just that the readers should have the right of reply; the interaction should prove to be of mutual benefit. FOCUS will not principally be a workshop magazine, but we would like that element to be present. At this stage, we have not seen fit to draw a line between unpublished and professional writers, though we would expect the greater part of the material to come from the former. No money changes hands of course, and we will be on our guard against any trend which might indicate that the magazine was becoming a professionals' wastepaper bin.

Otherwise, all should be as before; Chuck Connor suggested that new editors and a new approach warrants a new title, but the phoenix FOCUS should bear enough resemblance to the old one to render this unnecessary. By way of stressing this continuity, comments and criticism on issue 4 that anyone may have would be of interest both to ourselves and to the previous editors.

John Harvey has asked (nay, ordered) that we attempt to get this magazine to him for printing by mid-December and as this puts us under some pressure to have it all ready by that time, the sooner we receive offers of fiction, artwork (we need a cover), articles or whatever, the better. Outlines of articles would be appreciated in the first instance, in order that we avoid duplication of subject-matter. Correspondence and submissions should be sent to:-

FOCUS
c/o Chris Bailey
13b Charleville Circus
Sydenham
London SE26 6NR

from where it will also find its way into the hands of the other editors. The length of the magazine is as yet uncertain and we are not at present contemplating any restriction on the length of individual stories. We trust that common sense will prevail; if a story that will occupy fifteen pages of the magazine is sent in, it will obviously have to be rather good in order to merit inclusion.

Meanwhile, may Dorothy Davies spare her typewriter from any further soakings; salvation is not exactly on hand at the present moment, but someone is worrying about it.

WHO WRITES TO WHO ?

Iain Byers

You may remember my Standpoint (Vector 102), and it probably seems that I'm going on about it somewhat, especially since I mentioned it in a letter a little while ago. Well, as you'll recall, it was about apathy and the constant importuning from editors for letters or some kind of response and in it I posed the question: is there a difference between the loccers and the non-loccers? And also whether or not the general membership were apathetic. Well, I decided to find out, so I took notes of all the loccers for Matrix and Vector. I suppose, really, I should have done this earlier, so that I could put some facts in to the Standpoint, but better late than never. In the belief that you might be interested in the results, I have summarized the results, and you should find them in the figures below.

Combined total of letters received, covering Matrix 37 to 26 and Vector 103 to 98, was 343. 93 of these were WAHFed, and there were 168 contributors. In percentage terms, this means that 27% were WAHFed. If you take a membership figure of 800 then the percentage of members loccking is 21%, if a membership figure of 600, then 28%.

Vector (103 - 98), Kevin Smith editor

No. of letters received = 79; WAHFed = 24 (approx. 30%)

No. of contributors = 60: 15 people wrote more than once, being responsible for 34 of the letters received.

Percentage of membership loccking Vector = 7.5% or 10%, depending on the figure taken for total membership.

N.B. Vector 97 - 95, Mike Dickinson editor, had no letter column, a situation which thankfully, has now been amended.

Matrix (37 - 32), Graham James editor

No. of letters received = 139; WAHFed = 45 (approx. 32%)

No. of contributors = 82: 22 wrote more than once, being responsible for 88 of the letters received.

Percentage of membership loccking Matrix = 10.25% or 13%

Matrix (31 - 26), John and Eve Harvey editors

No. of letters = 125; WAHFed = 25 (approx. 20%)

No. of contributors = 81: 26 wrote more than once, being responsible for 68 of the letters.

Percentage of membership loccking = 10% or 13.5%

*Percentage of membership loccking Matrix under both editors, i.e. Graham James and John & Eve Harvey = 3.8% - 5%

Obviously, some people wrote more often, and were responsible for a large number of the letters, so although the overall number of letters suggests a high response rate, in actuality a small group of loccers, representing 8% or 11% of the membership, wrote almost 50% of the letters received.

It may seem unnecessary for me to give the names of the most frequent letter writers, but I'm going to do so.

Vector: Arnold Akien, Joe Nicholas, Andy Sawyer, Andrew Sutherland, all four of whom wrote three letters each.

Matrix (37-32): Chuck Connor (8), Simon Bostock (5), Gwynfor Jones (4), Martyn Talyor (4), Andy Sawyer (5), John Brunner (3), Kevin Busby (3), Dorothy Davies (3), Steve Ince (3), Dave Langford (3), Ken Mann (3), Joe Nicholas (3), Jon Wallace (3).

Matrix (31-26): William Goodall (5), Arnold Akien (4), William Bains (4), and Cyril Simsa, Andy Sawyer, Hussein Mohammed, Chris Lewis, Gwynfor Jones, Andy Hobbs, Keith Freeman, Paul Dembina and Chuck Connor who all wrote three letters apiece. And not forgetting Steve Ince (4).

Top writers for all: Chuck Connor (12), Andy Sawyer (11), Arnold Akien (9), William Bains (8), Steve Ince (8), Gwynfor Jones (7), Simon Bostock (7), Joe Nicholas (7), Mary Gentle (6), Paul

Dembina (6), William Goodall (5), Andrew Sutherland (5), Martyn Taylor (5), Jon Wallace (5).

Well, there you have it, the true loc figures. Make of them what you will. I didn't bother with Matrix before issue 26 or Vector before issue 95 (despite the fact that Vector prior to that did have a letter column) partly because I didn't deem them significant, but principally because I'm not a glutton for punishment. If you would be interested in the figures for these, however, then I might be prepared to go through the mind-destroying listing necessary for extracting the information.

The percentages of membership responding may not be too accurate. This is due to the constant fluctuation of the membership and the existence of letters not actually written by members. Also there were many names I couldn't find in the membership lists, no matter how far I went back, and no matter how much I searched the amendment lists or even the COA's. Would you believe I couldn't find Dorothy Davies' name listed anywhere!

As to whether or not it is primarily the newcomers or the longer term members who are doing the looting; there would not appear to be any significant leaning in favour of a particular group, though obviously the older members are better represented since they have had more time in which to accumulate a number of letters to their score.

FAIRCON '81

OR

RETURN OF THE KILLER HAGGIS

Christina Lake

I don't know where this addiction comes from, this strange hobby that has insinuated itself into the heart of Glasgow fandom. I am referring to, of course, the incessant organising of conventions. There have been several Faircons now, not to mention Albacon and Hitchercon, and all in the space of about three years. A Glasgow convention is well worth experiencing if only to count how many of the films and videos that you came really wanting to see you manage to miss. My personal list from Faircon '81 includes THE LIFE OF BRIAN, AIRPLANE, THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO, plus a couple of episodes of THE PRISONER. With an almost continuous video programme running every day (and at night over the hotel video system), a main programme of talks, panels and films, and an alternative programme featuring a variety of more or less esoteric items, this is hardly surprising. If most people don't have the stamina and appetite to do justice to it all (though apparently there are some who come solely to watch the programme), at least it ensures that everybody should find something to interest them.

On to the parts of the convention I did manage to see. 'Parts' is rather apposite, for the hotel didn't have the facilities to house all the events, so the convention had to be split between the hotel and another venue just around the corner. This wasn't as bad as it sounds. It meant making a more positive effort to visit the Art Show (generally acclaimed by all those who did) and to see the video programme, but otherwise did nothing to spoil the good atmosphere in the hotel.

The committee's idea of a welcome seemed to consist of a direct assault on any remnants of good taste people might have been foolish enough to bring with them. In short we were subjected to a full sound and vision showing of FAIRCON STRIKES BACK, that movie which gives new meaning to the word amateur. The assault was destined to continue. Saturday night saw the 2nd Annual Vogon Poetry Competition, a refugee from the Hitchercon programme, which was as truly awful as its name suggests. Some ten or more perpetrators of oral atrocities, masquerading under the euphemistic name of poetry, had to be hauled still declaiming from the stage by a pair of trained hitmen. The audience did its best to sabotage the event by talking through all but the most insistently pustulent parts, but this was not enough. Eventually the competition was won with a Vagonised version of the Owl and the Pussycat.

The Fancy Dress, the following evening's 'entertainment', should by contrast have been a bright and painless affair. That it wasn't cannot entirely be ascribed to members of C.U.S.F.S., though they did their best to drag down the level of the proceedings with a series of truly dreadful puns. The main problem was the scarcity of professional fancy dress entrants at the convention. But what was lacking in glitter and glamour, was made up for in part by the willingness of people to don towels, contribute puns, or in the case of the committee climb into the tattered remains of their costumes from FAIRCON STRIKES BACK. While the judges were choosing, Jim Barker staged a totally unrehearsed preview of the Captive Play, which he had written for Unicorn. This seemed to moderately entertain the captive audience.

Other events which stand out in my mind are such as the panel on planet building which turned to discussing what kind of planet might have produced the haggis; Nick Lowe discoursing on the role of coffee in S.F. (among other things); a 'Warwick' team mostly comprising of Jim Barker, beating Cambridge in the finals of University Challenge; punch and charades where nobody but Cambridge fans ever seemed to get a turn; and most particularly the fire alarm at ten o'clock Sunday morning specially programmed for the benefit of all those who had only gone to be 3 or 4 hours previously.

Taken all in all, it was a very enjoyable convention. Probably because Faircon is smaller than some there seemed much more opportunity to join in events so that you could almost feel you were in a very large group of friends (even though many were people I had never met before the convention). Newcomers and old hands alike did participate, and the result was a very good weekend for me, and I believe for many others.

SF ON BBC RADIO

Phillip Nichols

BBC Radio 4's "Saturday Night Theatre" excursion into SF was said by the Beeb to be an occasional series reflecting "the writing of Science Fiction from the turn of the century to the present day". Those reflections being produced, no doubt, in a distorting minor "The First Men in the Moon", "The Chrysalids", "Journey into Space: The Return from Mars", "A Fall of Moondust", "The Technicolor Time Machine" - hardly a representative sampling of SF past and present. Why were these stories chosen?

With such thoughts, on 15th August I wrote to Mr Ronald Mason, Head of Drama, BBC Radio. I asked him why International Celebrity (and sometime writer) Arthur C Clarke was represented by "A Fall of Moondust", whose only distinguishing feature in The Greater Scheme of Things is the dubious feat of having created (in book form) the disaster-movie format. Why not dramatise the more significant "Childhood's End", or at least "Rendezvous with Rama"?

Mr Mason: When it comes to the choice of books to be dramatised, then there are a number of considerations over and above choosing what may be the best example of the author's work. The copyright of many books is not available for radio dramatisation, which was the case with "Childhood's End" by Arthur C Clarke. The second of his books that you mentioned, "Rendezvous with Rama", is certainly an excellent one, but it is a descriptive rather than a dialogue book, and would not have made a good play.

Fair comment. But what about the inclusion of "Journey into Space" - does that really "reflect the writing of SF. . . ? Mr Mason makes no comment.

I then asked him about forthcoming plays in the series, expecting (reasonably, I thought) there to be a mid-1960s novel, a 1970s novel, and possibly a 1980s novel. But no, Mr Mason said, "The Technicolor Time Machine" by Harry Harrison and this will be broadcast on Saturday, 5th September - which was the very day Mr Mason's letter landed on my doormat.

So that little series passed off uneventfully. What of the future? Are we going to get any more radio SF? Is SF not being neglected by the Beeb?

Mr Mason: The BBC has the same commitment to Science Fiction that it has towards any other form of fiction. . . but such projects can only occupy a certain amount of our output. Audience research figures show that Science Fiction is one of the least popular forms of drama and our first priority must be to provide as balanced an output as possible.

He's right, you know; the only people who listen to these plays are SF fans and little old ladies who can't reach the "off" switch on their trannies. A few months back, Radio Times printed a letter which complained about "all those freaky space plays".

Of course, where Mr Mason says, "least popular forms of drama", he means "with Radio 4 listeners". We all know that radio is a medium in which certain types of SF can work very well, and a medium in which SF has a relatively untarnished reputation. And SF certainly was popular on radio in the 1950s. And technically and dramatically the "Saturday Night Theatre" mini-series was done exceedingly well.

The problem, though, is age. In general, SF fans are young and, in general, young people don't listen to Radio 4 on Saturday evenings; conversely, Radio 4 listeners are, in general, older and don't listen to SF. They hear the words "Science Fiction" and switch off without listening to the play. And they write complaining letters to Radio Times.....

Obviously, for broadcast SF to continue successfully (in terms of audience response) this prejudice must be eroded. And although as SF fans we might object to the lack of representativeness of the books adapted, it must be agreed that in order to overcome this prejudice the general audience must be given SF that (at least) entertains and leaves them wanting more. "Saturday Night Theatre" is primarily an entertainment series. More highbrow stuff tends to be put out in "The Monday Play" or on Radio 3. Those of us expecting The History of SF were expecting too much of a series designed for this particular time slot.

Mr Mason: This series was never intended to be a fully comprehensive survey of Science Fiction writing. Such a project would have been too vast to contain within a slot which, by definition,

must appeal to a wide range of tastes and interests. The problem is that there are always so many things that must inevitably be omitted and so in the end what is chosen must to a certain extent rely on personal taste. We found the same problem two years ago when we produced three features on the history and development of Science Fiction called collectively "What If...?".

Is the BBC likely to continue with book adaptations, or are new works to be commissioned for radio? Or are we to have more continuing series like "Earthsearch"?

Mr Mason: We will continue to produce single plays like Tanith Lee's "The Silver Sky" or Steve Gallagher's "Alternative to Suicide" and also to continue with series like "Earthsearch". . . Our future plays include a new series of "Earthsearch" which will probably be broadcast next spring and a new writer's play called "Project Genesis" which is destined for the "Monday Play" slot. We are always willing to consider new ideas from any writer but they must be conceived and planned for radio. Adaptations from existing works are also considered from time to time, but we would expect the adaptor to either have professional experience of dramatic writing or to have completed a large part of the script on spec.

Perhaps the placing of "Project Genesis" in the "Monday Play" slot means it is of a more challenging nature than what was put out in "Saturday Night Theatre".

Neither do I think that this is the BBC giving us a token SF play. The lucky listener can hear occasional mini-plays of an SF nature which, through equal competition with other plays, have got on the air. A case in point is a "Twenty Minute Theatre" production called "Steak and Microchips" by Jeffrey Beavers, broadcast on August 29th (a partially successful, comic, "trendy" variation on the theme of "The Machine Stops").

Let us hope that the "Saturday Night Theatre" mini-series is the start of something big for radio SF. I certainly get the impression that Ronald Mason is himself keen on continuing the trend, and the consistently high quality of Glyn Dearman's direction indicates that he has a liking for the stuff as well.

Contrast this with television, where the BBC's answer to the call for SF is to dust off "The Day of the Triffids" again.

reviews

EXCALIBUR

An In-depth Review by MARTYN TAYLOR

Director: John Boorman; 135 minutes.

Strange beasts, legends. Very often they are simple, two dimensional and little more than a hopeful miasma of desires and dreams. At the same time, however, they embody strong elements of cultural traditions that ring in the ears on down the years. The Arthur legend is probably the most resonant piece of folk lore in the British Isles (pacem Brian Boru) our once and future king. Anyone seeking to portray the legend has a well trodden path to walk while anyone who seeks out the truth of Arthur treads very dangerous ground. The substance of the legend - chivalry and all that jazz - lies at the core of our national psyche. Whatever we as a nation may actually do - our claim is that an Englishman's word is his bond whereas the rest of the world knows us as Perfidious Albion - it is towards that sanctum of knightly, Christian behaviour that we publicly genuflect. You can slag off princesses, Anne and Margaret, to your heart's content. You can even call H.M.Q. a dowdy little hausfrau and we will smile, but touch our Guinevere and we will set Willie Hamilton onto you.

Strange beasts, legends.

In 'Excalibur' John Boorman gives us a curious amalgam. The pure legend is there - knights in mail suits of armour ride out of their glittering castle in search of the Holy Grail - but so are the historic realities of the two times in which the seed that grew into the legend was sown (immediately post Roman and high Medieval) - the knights ride in a land of mud and blood and homespun cloth - and so too are glimpses of the cultural realities behind the legend, the reasons why it is even more bright and beckoning today than it ever was. It is a heady mix for a film, at once facile and deep, but there is nothing anodyne or bland about it.

The story is fundamentally Mallory, although Boorman evidently has looked at other versions. Merlin, in particular, could have stepped straight from the pages of Robert Nye's weird and entirely wonderful book of the same name. Uther Pendragon comes to a truce with the Duke of Cornwall and at the party following takes a serious lust towards Igraine, Cornwall's wife.

Reluctantly Merlin facilitates by magic Uther's bedding of Igraine, which takes place under the baleful eye of her daughter, Morgana. While we see the fully armoured Uther pumping out his life into the naked Igraine we also see the fully armoured Cornwall pumping out his life, having been thrown by his horse onto a conveniently placed sheaf of naked spears. In return for his part in this rape of all that is virtuous in a king Merlin is given the child resulting from the copulation and, incidentally, the undying hatred of Morgana. Uther too gets his just desserts at the hands of Cornwall's men, but not before burying the sword Excalibur in the stone from which it can be drawn only by his true heir.

These opening twenty minutes or so are almost Greekly ritualistic in their portrayal of the personal betrayal of public duty. The whole business is heavily pregnant with symbolic motifs, both visual and philosophical, symbols that recur later in almost mirror image. In these symbols can be seen the central dilemma of characters involved in the use and abuse of legitimate authority, power and magic. Kings had immense power but personal retribution is shown as the inevitable consequence of the abuse of their power for the gratification of personal lust.

Following this scene set the legend gallops along on Shergar's back. Arthur draws Excalibur, albeit unwittingly, and is acclaimed king simply by having done so. He lacks the assets of a king at the time, but sets about the job with a fresh faced willingness to play the role to the hilt - which turns out frequently to be Excalibur buried up to the hilt in the bodies of less than enthusiastic subjects. He gets Guinevere, meets Lancelot, founds the Round Table and establishes an all round golden age in the land. All in all not too bad an achievement for a young chap who looked singularly ill equipped to be a king. At the height of his glory Arthur asks Merlin whether he agrees that they have defeated evil. Merlin, though, has the sight, and knows what lurks over the horizon. Good cannot exist without evil, he says, and evil lurks where it is least expected. For Arthur such a place is in the hearts of Guinevere and Lancelot. By some strange coincidence of the plot Gawain chooses that moment to accuse the pair of the sort of *lesé majesté* naughtiness that can get a princess stoned to death even today. It is, of course, not true and Lancelot knows full well that Lancelot, as the king's champion, will prove the innocence of his queen with the point of his lance. Lancelot, though, is a bit of a Timmy Carter. He has bedded Guinevere in his heart and agonises over his worthlessness to the point of fighting his own, empty, suit of armour and sticking himself through with his broadsword. Little daunted by this dark night of the soul Lancelot arrives in the nick of time, clears Guinevere's name, and repairs to the forest for a long spell of rest and recuperation having taken a fair old battering in the lists.

At which point Guinevere follows him into the forest and what takes place is definitely recreational but cannot have done much for the recovery of Lancelot from wounds that have cost him several pints of blood!

Arthur knows that he has been betrayed both by his beloved queen and the best friend, who also happens to personify the best in his land. In fact he too rides into the forest and discovers them sleeping, nakedly entwined. As his father Uther did before him when confronted with a conflict between duty as a king and desire as a man Arthur abdicates his duty. He leaves Excalibur stuck into the earth between Lancelot and Guinevere. The parallel with Uther is taken further when Morgana, having entrapped Merlin through his own unrequitable desire for her, comes to Arthur while he is under her enchantment. The result of this copulation is Mordred. On waking Lancelot and Guinevere realise the horror of their action. Lancelot runs, leaving Guinevere cursed around the sword in an image that is at once amazingly phallic and appalling melancholic.

As a result of Arthur's withdrawal from being a true king the land withers and prosperity dies. In one last, desperate attempt to restore the land the knights ride out of Camelot in search of the grail that has been lost, the secret of which will restore everything. Arthur himself goes into a physical as well as spiritual decline as, over a decade, the knights one by one fall prey to their own weakness or the necromantic wiles of Morgana, who is more than happy at the situation. After all, her misbegotten son is next in line for the throne once Arthur shuffles off this mortal coil. Eventually the pure in heart Perceval brings the secret, the knowledge - vouchsafed to him in visions of religious fervour caused like so many such visions by oxygen starvation of the brain - that the king is the land and the land is the king. Their healths are mutually dependent. Arthur takes a sip of the wine that reaches the parts of his being that other wines cannot reach and is instantly restored. With those few knights still alive he does what he has always known he would have to do, which is ride out to destroy the danger of his sister and his son. On the way he looks in on the monastery where Guinevere has been keeping Excalibur safe. As the king rides the land bursts forth again in blossom. Then father and unnatural son - who has been anointed by his mother, Achilles fashion - meet in the climactic battle and do away with each other in an orgy of mud, blood, mist and failed magic.

'Excalibur' is riddled with references to other films concerned with similar areas of legend. The forest in which the knights disport themselves is so lush and verdant that Errol Flynn could step from behind any tree dressed in Lincoln green, and laughing. The stylised armour would require only a few extra points and a coat or two of lacquer to have stepped out of any Kurosawa samurai epic. The Japanese influence is strong throughout the whole film. Boorman even refers to his own work, kitting out the doomed, androgenous golden boy Mordred in golden armour much more in the Graeco-Roman body moulded style than the European medieval style of the others, topped off with a helmet which is the flying head from 'Zardoz'. Guinevere's ride through the forest is pure Ken Russell ('Mahler') and the conflict between love and duty in Arthur almost begs for a soundtrack by Frankie Lane. The scene in the nunnery between Arthur and Guinevere could have been lifted entire from Lester's 'Robin and Marian' in tone and temper.

Boorman makes much use of music by Wagner and Orff. This operatic reference is particularly strong in the ultimate battle. Arthur and Mordred slay each other in a pinky static tableau that could have come from a Coliseum rendering of the Ring of the Nibelung, the reference to which is strengthened still further by the presence of Percival (Parsifal) as Arthur's companion rather than the traditional Bedevere.

The film is sumptuously set and shot, making good use of Boorman's talent for *tromp de l'oeil* cinematography, but it does have weaknesses, particularly in casting. Nigel Terry as Arthur does his best, but simply is not regal. He has a lot of the Prince Charles about him but not a lot of the ravening war lord. Cherie Lunghi (in whose long standing, salivating admiration I yield second place to no man) is delicious and nymphlike as Guinevere, but she is no wilful queen blindly pursuing her own sensuousness and desire. She is just too nice to betray Arthur. There is nothing fatal about this female. Nicholas Clay looks good as Lancelot but does not ring true as a figure of legend. It has been suggested that Nastassia Kinski is too modern a face in Roman Polanski's 'Trees', and the same may well be true of these three. They act too well and perform not enough, making their characters just too civilised. Perhaps they should have taken their lead from those two great classical character actors, Freddie Jones and Patrick Stewart, who adorn the film. Paul Geoffrey as Percival, though, manages to imbue his performance with just the right blend of sculpted legend and credible humanity.

They are all overshadowed by the performances of Nicol Williamson and Helen Mirren. Williamson gives a performance of unleavened exoticism and eccentricity as Merlin, running through vocalisations in which barely two words emerge the same. His behaviour is elliptical, his speech cryptic, as befits the last magician who knows that his time is past. Merlin, of course, is more than an ordinary necromancer. He is a failed attempt at an anti-Christ for one thing, and a eunuch for another, and a master of the real magic that shapes the world of men - knowledge. Morgana, however, is all charms and potions and love philtres, crude, ineffective baubles when set beside Merlin's powers. She does have one asset, though, and while there may be an actress who embodies the essence of sex magic better than Helen Mirren none can act anything like so well. Merlin exists in the realm of the spirit while Morgana is very firmly rooted in the world of the flesh. Both these characters are essentially the stuff of legend, yet in 'Excalibur' they are fleshed out into real - if very strange - people in two dramatic tours de force.

'Excalibur' is about legend and the meaning of legend. At the core of the film is a philosophical and psychological dilemma expressed by Merlin. The one god is replacing the many gods. It is the time of men, not necromancers. Put crudely it is a time for humanity to leave the nest, to stand on their own feet, to be cast out of Eden. Merlin expresses his own state, but within it he encompasses the fate of the dream kings, of which Arthur is the last and most glorious. The resolution of the plot entails Arthur accepting the responsibility for his own actions and the consequences flowing from those actions. In doing so he dies, and leaves no king to rule after him. No-one calls 'The king is dead, long live the king' after his funeral ship. Could the moral be clearer? In a land where every man accepts the responsibility for his own actions then those men have no more need of kings than they have of wizards.

You can see 'Excalibur' as a humanist, republican - even anarchist - tract, despite its trappings of kings, lords, gods and magic. On the other hand you can see it as an exciting, fast moving adventure story that takes the bare bones of the legend dressed up in finery and then shows them in richness. Boorman has linked the Arthur myth to similar stories from Europe and elsewhere, yet he never stops the action to make any 'important' point. The pictures tell his story for him, just the way a good film should. He has made the story timeless in the way Shakespeare's tragedies are timeless, and for the same reasons. In its way 'Excalibur' is as good a film as any of Kurosawa's sketches from Japanese legend, which makes it a very good film indeed. Strangely, though, it was the echoes of that most modern and filmic of myths that sounded most strongly, in my head at least - those of the American frontier west.

Crazy? Maybe. It is that sort of film. You may love 'Excalibur' or you may hate it, but I challenge you to be indifferent towards it. See it.

TWO FILMS FROM THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Reviewed by Jim Darroch

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK ; Directed by John Carpenter. 99 mins.

The first 'big' film of the Filmfest was the British premiere of this, Carpenter's latest offering of nostalgia. Carpenter likes remaking old Hollywood pictures and usually manages it with flair. 'Assault on Precinct 13' was a western (Rio Bravo) and 'Halloween' was a homage to the traditional horror movie. It is no secret that he may yet direct a true remake, that of 'The Thing from another world'. However, this time round he has made another western - with the accent on spaghetti. Unfortunately, the whole thing is much more self-conscious than in his previous films.

The plot lends itself to annotation, as follows:-

1. The year is 1997.
2. Manhattan Island is a huge maximum-security prison, made necessary

by a four hundred percent increase in the crime rate. A massive wall has been built on the opposite shoreline. The prison contains the ultra-dangerous lifers and a number of "crazies", who live in the sewers and tunnels. 3. The President's plane is sabotaged and crash lands on Manhattan Island. 4. Enter war hero "Snake" Plissken, who is just about to become a full-fledged member of the prison. However, he "opts" to help the authorities and retrieve the President, or what's left of him. 5. The President has a cassette on him, vital to the security of the world, which must be delivered to a summit conference within twenty-four hours. 6. Our war veteran has something attached to him that will blow his head off within twenty-two hours - only the authorities can prevent it....

START NOW

And so it goes on.....

You don't need to know anymore about the story, it goes along predictably enough. The odd thing is that Carpenter doesn't actually make the film very thrilling, preferring instead to introduce a variety of weird characters. Among these people, in a superb cast, is The Duke (played by Isaac Hayes) who rules the island and who drives about in a pretty flashy car with chandeliers on the wings! Carpenter's music is its usual efficient self.

If you like very straightforward, action-packed cowboy movies, you will like ESCAPE; if you like John Carpenter movies, you will like ESCAPE; if you like films that make you think and provoke hours of discussion, you will not like ESCAPE one tiny bit.

He does remakes very nicely, but is that enough?

HEAVY METAL ; Directed by Gerald Potterton

The European premiere of this lively film was presented at the Filmfest. As you may know, it is based on the cartoon-strip magazine of the same name and is, in my opinion, by far the best animated film for donkeys.

HEAVY METAL follows an entity known as the Loch-nar, which represents the "sum of all evils" and which appears as a glowing green sphere. The Loch-nar has the ability to move through all of space and time completely at will. So, it travels through a sequence of eight stories and, therefore, acts as the thread to hold all the tales together. The longest of the individual stories is about half-an-hour in length, and the shortest about three minutes. What makes the film so worthwhile, is that each segment has been drawn in a completely different style. For instance, there is a very funny segment that uses the style of Angus McKie and is based on his "So beautiful and so dangerous" story, which relates what happens when a bunch of spaced-out aliens kidnap a group of Earth folk. Another superb sequence is drawn in a more "realistic" style and is set in New York in the year 2025. It follows a Philip Marlowe-type cab driver (i.e., incredibly cynical), who gets involved in a deadly hunt for the Loch-nar, during which a number of people have rather nasty things happen to them. Other stories use the style of Richard Corben (from his story, DEN) and Bernie Wrightson (from a comedy set in a space station, CAPTAIN STERNN - this is really brilliant use of animation and it is also VERY funny). A further tale, the three minute one, is from an idea by Dan O'Bannon and is very reminiscent of ALIEN.

However, the piece de resistance of the movie is the finale, a massive sword-and-sorcery epic. Basically, the Loch-nar transforms a band of renegades into a super-powerful force of pure evil, which then goes on to obliterate the utopian civilisation that exists on the particular planet. However, one person survives, who sets off to reach the one remaining true guardian of the world. And so on. This story has some exceptionally violent scenes and also some brilliantly memorable images. Unfortunately, it does go on a wee bit too long and slightly outstays its welcome, but this is a small price to pay for some really inspired work.

The end of the film does leave it open for a sequel (but, HEAVY METAL is self-contained) and, oh dear, I hear that the producers would like to make more movies in the same mould, no doubt spending less money on each one.

Anyway, back to this one. It does, as I have said, contain some brilliant animation (and so it should, with the likes of Neil Adams working on it) and is a joy all round. What it also does is to make Ralph Bakshi's supposed new techniques look decidedly shoddy and primitive. LORD OF THE RINGS cannot bear ANY comparison with HEAVY METAL.

Understandably, the soundtrack has numerous heavy metal tracks on it, ranging from Blue Oyster Cult to Grand Funk Railroad to Nazareth. The bulk of the music, though, is orchestral and is by Elmer Bernstein, in truly epic mould.

So, if you want to see the best American animated film since FANTASIA, see HEAVY METAL.

FANSPEAK

:a glossary of Fan jargon

Compiled by Steve Green

AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION (APA): Groups of fans who produce fanzines solely for distribution within their own memberships, a phenomenon more common in the United States (where the first, FAPA, was launched by Don Wollheim in 1937) than in the United Kingdom. These publications (known as apazines) are collated centrally by the association's Official Editor (or Central Mailer) and then circulated amongst the membership, who must demonstrate an agreed minimum activity (minac) each year or face expulsion.

AMZINE: Early term for fan publication, superseded by "fanzine" and its derivatives.

ANNISH: Anniversary issue.

APAZINE: Fanzine produced for an amateur press association.

ASTRAL LEAGUE: Semi-secret fannish society inspired by the deranged mind of D West.

ASTRAL POLE: Deceptively simple-looking tool used in the sacred initiation rites of the Astral League; may resemble a common household broom with the head removed, but don't let appearances fool you about its true significance.

BHEER: Beer

BIDDING COMMITTEE: Sites of major sf events are chosen up to two years ahead. Prospective convention committees seeking support for their bids use a variety of methods, including bidding parties and pre-supporting memberships. See CONVENTION.

BLOG: Mythical fannish drink. Term usually refers to an extremely convoluted cocktail.

BNF: Big Name Fan. Title refers to fannish reputation rather than number of characters in name.

BSFA (BoSFA): British Science Fiction Association. If you're reading this, you're probably already a member. If not, try sending six quid to Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland - you'll be surprised how much you'll thank yourself afterwards.

CAMERA COPY: Finished text and illustrations for lithographic reproduction.

CAMERA READY: Ready for lithographic reproduction. See CAMERA COPY.

CARNELL: The annual British Science Fiction Association award, named for British editor Ted Carnell.

CENTRAL MAILER: see AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION.

COA: Change of address.

COLLATION PARTY: Fannish gathering overtly to collate a newly-printed fanzine from neatly-stacked piles of pages into the finished product; the real reason, of course, is more social than mechanical.

CONREP: Convention Report.

CONTRIB: Contribution, usually for a fanzine.

CONVENTION: Organised fan gathering, although the organisation tends to be minimal and the events at the convention (or con) usually revolve around the bar as much as the formal programme. The first was held in Leeds back in 1937 but the convention culture is now very much centred on the United States, home of the World Science Fiction Convention (Worldcon). In Britain the largest event organised is the yearly Eastercon held, not too surprisingly, every Easter, followed closely by the more overtly fannish Novacon, organised over the first weekend in November by the Birmingham Science Fiction Group since 1972. There are three types of convention memberships: pre-supporting, a vote of confidence for a prospective committee (see BIDDING COMMITTEE) allowing a discount (usually twice the pre-supporting fee) on further membership; supporting, which entitles the fan in question to all convention literature (see PROGRESS REPORT, PROGRAMME BOOK); full (or attending), entitling the con-goer to all literature and actual attendance.

CORFLU: Correction fluid, used when preparing camera copy. Also used to correct duplicator stencil

CROGGLED: Astounded, shocked.

CROTTLED GREEPS: Mythical fannish food, allegedly worse than even the embalmed Brian Burgess pork pie displayed at a recent British convention.

CRUDSHEET: See SLIPSHEET.

CRUZINE: Badly written or printed fanzine; examples proliferate in fandom.

D&D: Dungeons & Dragons: the fantasy-orientated branch of wargaming.

DEGAFIATE: See GAFIA.

DNP: Do Not Publish, indicating a letter not to be quoted in print.

DUFF: Down Under Fan Fund, organised to promote international goodwill between North America and Australia and supported entirely by donations. In alternate years American fans are flown to an Australian convention and Australian fans flown to an American Worldcon. The British equivalent is GUFF (Get-up-and-Under Fan Fund), won in 1981 by Joe Nicholas. See also TAFF.

DUPICATED: Printed from typed stencils, such as Paperback Inferno.

EASTERCON: See CONVENTION.

EGOBOO: Ego boost, the warm feeling inside experienced by a fan seeing his or her name in print. See EGOSCAN.

EGOSCAN: Thumbing through a fanzine in search of egoboo.

ELECTROSTENCILS: High quality stencils used for duplicated artwork.

FAAN: A fan who has become more interested in the social aspects of sf fandom than sf itself.

FAANISH: See FAAN.

FAFIA: Forced Away From It All, an occupational hazard for fans with a full time occupation. Literally, forced by outside pressures to drop all fan activity. Rarely permanent. See GAFIA.

FALLING OVER: Honorable fannish ceremony usually performed within staggering distance of the convention bar.

FANAC: Fan activity, such as editing a fanzine or organising a convention.

FANDOM: The collective body of fans, a network that stretches throughout the world organising conventions, publishing fanzines and taking part in other fannish activity (see FALLING OVER). Some members even read sf.

FANED: Fanzine editor.

FAN FEUD: Disagreement between two fans, usually as theatrical as it is vitriolic.

FAN GODS: Roscoe, Foo Foo and Ghu; Ghu is the most commonly observed, though none of the three is designed to be taken seriously.

FANNISH: A fannish fan is one interested in the social side of fandom, though not necessarily to the extremes of a faan. See FAAN, FANDOM, CONVENTION, FANZINE.

FANZINE: Amateur publication produced by an sf fan, although the subject matter need not revolve totally (or even at all) around sf.

FAUNCH: Desire

FEGHOOT: Elaborate pun thinly disguised as a short story, originated by Reginald Bretnor.

FEMMEFAN: Female fan.

FEN: Plural of "fan", usually dropped in favour of the simpler "fans".

PHAN: "Fan" with an unnecessary fannish "h", frowned on by most fans.

FIAWOL: Fandom Is A Way Of Life. Acronym for the philosophy of the most committed fans. See FIJAGH.

FICZINE: Fiction-orientated fanzine.

FIJAGH: Fandom Is Just A Goddam Hobby. Like FIAWOL, a philosophical acronym, but taking a slightly less committed stance.

FILKSINGING: Fannish folk-singing, usually performed late at night at conventions and enjoyed more by participants than captive audience.

FILLO: Filler illustration, used to avoid blank spaces in fanzines.

FIRST FANDOM: The generation of fandom originating in the 1930s and including such future authors as Pohl and Asimov. Its British equivalent included Clarke and Wyndham.

FNZ: Fanzine.

FOO FOO: See FAN GODS.

FUGGHEAD: Idiot.

GAFIA: Get Away From It All. Voluntary equivalent of FAFIA. Degafiation is the reverse process.

GENZINE: General-interest fanzine, including non-sf-orientated material.

GHOD: God.

GHU: See FAN GODS.

GoH: Guest of Honour. Most conventions have at least one, usually a professional writer, and larger events may also feature a fan guest of honour.

GOPHER: Convention helper, usually most visible during auctions. The title is derived from the phrase "go for".

GROK: To understand, as in the trekkie motto "I grok Spock". Term coined by Robert Heinlein in Stranger in a Strange Land.

GROTCH: Complain

GUFF: See DUFF.

HUCKSTER: Book and magazine dealer.

HUCKSTER ROOM: Space allocated to book and magazine dealers at a convention.

HUGO: The Science Fiction Achievement Awards, or Hugos, are presented annually at the Worldcon and voted for by members of that year's convention. The categories always include awards for best novel, short story, novella, artist, editor, fanzine, dramatic presentation. Created in

1953, the awards were named in honour of sf magazine pioneer Hugo Gernsback, who received a special Hugo in 1960.

ILLO: Illustration.

INTERLEAVING: The process of using a slipsheet.

IRC: International Reply Coupon, a convenient method of sending return postage to a foreign fan. Available from post offices.

ISH: Issue.

JLAS: Jacqueline Lichtenberg Appreciation Society. Alleged fan group, but real raison d'être is far more tongue-in-cheek and unlikely to be appreciated in return by its target.

KTF: Kill The Fuckers. A particularly vitriolic style of reviewing; perhaps its most notable exponent in Britain of late has been Joe Nicholas.

LETTER OF COMMENT: Response to a fanzine received, and one of the best ways of saying "thank you" to the editor concerned, even if the comments themselves aren't exactly favourable. Often as interesting as the text that inspired them, letters frequently make up a large portion of the following issue and earn their authors free copies. Indeed, some members of fanzine fandom do very little other than write letters of comment.

LETTERCOL: See LOCCOL.

LETTERZINE: Fanzine comprised almost completely of letters.

LITHO: Printed by offset lithography, as is Vector and Matrix.

LITCRIT: Literary criticism.

LOC: Abbreviation for letter of comment.

LOCCER: Author of a letter of comment.

LOCCOL: Letter Column.

MAILING COMMENTS: Column usually carried in an apazine, commenting on the contents of the previous mailing.

MC: Master of Ceremonies. Alternatively: Emcee.

MCs: Mailing comments.

MIMEO: Duplicated (American duplicators are known as mimeographs).

MINAC: Minimum activity, the least amount of work required to retain membership in an amateur press association.

MS: Manuscript.

NEBULA: Annual award presented by the Science Fiction Writers of America; similar to the Hugo, but presented by professionals rather than fans. Dubious critical value.

NEO, NEOFAN: A newcomer to fandom, as yet uninitiated in its lore and sacred rites; probably says "sci-fi" a lot, too.

NEWSZINE: News-orientated fanzine.

NOVA: Annual award for the best fanzine of the year, voted on and presented by members of that year's Novacon. Applies to British fanzines only.

NOVACON: See CONVENTION.

OE: Official Editor

OFFICIAL EDITOR: See AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION

OFFSET: See LITHO.

ONE TUN: Famous London pub frequented by fans and pros; replaced the White Horse as Britain's best-known venue.

ORBITER: Critical group formed by writers (often new writers), members circulating their work among each other for analysis.

PERSONALZINE: The most subjective species of fanzine; in its most extreme form, a kind of one-handed group therapy.

PIE-KILL: Lighthearted custard pie "assassination", a form of slapstick more prolific in the United States than this side of the Big Pond.

PRO: Professional, as in tongue-in-cheek term "filthy pro" for professional writer.

PROGRAMME BOOK: The major item of convention literature, including biographies of the guests of honour and a list of the convention members as well as the schedule of events.

PROGRESS REPORT: Regular publication sent to members of a forthcoming convention, listing new members and including such vital information as the convention's venue, how to get there and how long the bars will stay open when you do. If the convention is an annual event (such as the Eastercon), members of the previous year's usually receive the first progress report of its successor, regardless of whether or not they've paid to be a member.

PROPELLER BEANIE: Seen more frequently in fanzine illustrations than in real life, customised headware indicating the owner's allegiance to the fannish way of life. Features a small propeller at the peak, supposedly enabling the fan to attain higher levels of contemplation.

PROZINE: Professional science fiction magazine, such as Ad Astra.

PUB: Publish.

REAL SOON NOW: Procrastination is part of the fanzine editor's way of life, and promising that the next issue of a fanzine is due Real Soon Now is a tongue-in-cheek way of acknowledging this fact. Generally, the phrase translates as "whenever I have the time, the money and the energy".

REVIEWCOL: Review column.

REVIEWZINE: Fanzine consisting mainly of reviews.

ROOM PARTY: Informal, unofficial late-night drinking session at convention.

ROSCOE: See FAN GODS.

RSN: Abbreviation for Real Soon Now.

SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS OF AMERICA: Professional organisation for sf writers in the United States (also including British writers such as Dave Langford whose work has appeared in the US), presenting the annual Nebula award as well as publishing both SFWA Bulletin and SFWA Forum. Formed in 1965 as a result of the Milford Science Fiction Writers' Conference, the SFWA has been frequently criticised, and many members resigned in 1976 when Polish author Stanislaw Lem's honorary membership was cancelled, among them Christopher Priest.

SCIENTIFICATION: Early term for science fiction coined by pioneer magazine editor Hugo Gernsback following the launch of Amazing Stories in 1926.

SCI-FI: Term for sf generally used by non-fans, and hated by many fans, who see it as an insulting abbreviation and use it to describe the lowest quality television shows and films.

SERCON: Serious and Constructive, the approach to sf typified by Vector.

SF, sf: The widely accepted abbreviations for science fiction. See SCI-FI.

SFWA: The Science Fiction Writers of America.

SHAGGY GOD STORY: Ubiquitous form of the "shock ending" science fiction short story, usually ending with the reader's realisation that the two protagonists are none other than Adam and Eve, and that the planet in question is Earth (yawn); about as innovative as the majority of time paradox stories.

SLIPSHEET: A sheet of paper used to separate freshly-duplicated pages and so prevent smudging, also known as a crudsheet.

SMOOOOOTH!: Term coined by American fan Bob Tucker for the sound one is supposed to make after a swig of Jim Beam liquor.

S&S: Sword & Sorcery.

STENS: Stencils. See DUPLICATED.

SUB: Subscription

TAFF: Transatlantic Fan Fund. Similar to DUFF, but created to foster exchanges between British and American fandom.

TRADE: The act of exchanging fanzines, one of the many pleasures of publishing.

TREKKER: See TREKKIE.

TREKKIE: Fan with particular (often inordinate) interest in the 1960s television series STAR TREK, frequently lampooned by the main body of fandom. Also known as trekkers, the majority of trekkies (for reasons best known to the psychiatrists among us) are female.

TRUFAN: The most ardent and enthusiastic brand of fan, literally the true fan.

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THE USUAL: No fanzine editor seriously expects to retire on the profits from his publication; most are willing to accept "the Usual" - another fanzine in trade, a contribution (article or illustration) or the promise of a letter of comment.

WAHF: We Also Heard From, a list of the correspondants whose letters are gratefully acknowledged but not printed. See LETTER OF COMMENT.

WAITLIST: Roll call of fans wishing to join an amateur press association.

WKF: Well-Known Fan, one step down from a BNF.

WORLDCON: The annual world sf event; see CONVENTION.

WRAPAROUND: Cover of book or magazine with a single illustration stretched across front and back.

ZINE: Fanzine or prozine, but more usually the former.

XX

Acknowledgements

Although now out of print and in certain respects both outdated and incomplete, Rob Jackson's Little Dictionary of SF Fan Terms (1976), published jointly by Rob and the BSFA, provided an invaluable guide to the layout of this glossary and without Rob's groundwork I doubt very much that I would ever have attempted this task in the first place.

XX



Journalists are frequently accused of exhibiting a macabre fascination with bad news, but by any standards recent developments on the clubs scene make for depressing if intriguing reading.

Lowpoint of the season has to be the collapse of the Birmingham Science Fiction Film Society (as predicted here last issue); not because of any great loss felt by the Midlands fans (its 57 members hadn't even met since May), but because of the deadly effect it very nearly had on Birmingham's premier fan event, Novacon.

The full drama reeks of French farce - BSFFS chairman Chris Smith, the Brum Group committee claims, organised the now-cancelled Filmcon without any authorisation from the parent group; meanwhile, Smith's live-in girlfriend Jean Frost is politely requested to resign as Novacon membership secretary by chairman Paul Oldroyd after continual non-appearances at committee meetings, which she does, in favour of Novacon veterans Stan & Helen Eling; however when Stan attempts to collect the membership records from Jean he is persistently thwarted by Smith, presumably over some grudge the latter has against the Brum Group and more specifically the Brum Group committee; an emergency meeting of the Brum Group winds up the spin-off BSFFS and agrees to pay off any debts (namely £90 claimed by F.D.A. for cancelled orders, the society's own committee having written off the £100 or so they dredged out of their own pockets to finance the BSFFS's monthly newsletter in its final few issues), but members give a straight thumbs-down to suggestions that the BSFG re-float the doomed Filmcon....

Deep breath. The situation finally comes to a head days before Unicorn 2, as Solihull Group member Phill Probert (former chairman of the equally ill-fated Babel-Con) is invited by Smith to collect the records under threat of legal action by Brum Group legal eagle Tim Stannard, on the grounds that Phill is the only Brum Grouper Smith has had little contact with, and therefore no grudges against; surprisingly, Smith keeps his word and hands over the files, with less than two months left to organise hotel bookings.

The fate of Filmcon is already sealed. The remaining committee members (Smith having headed for the hills in May, surfacing only to shout abuse at Stan Eling and hand over the files to Phill Probert) are left with balances totalling just over £370 to pay membership bills of over £580; although the conversion charges (the difference between attending and supporting rates) can be repaid, unless the Brum Group steps in to save the day (highly unlikely) most fans will never see the bulk of their money again.

And whichever way you cut it, that adds a whole new meaning to the word "con", folks....

Obituary II: the High Wycombe Science Fiction Group, victim of shrinking attendances (reports Chris Lewis, half of the membership at last count).

Now the good news (pause for mass cheering): the Shrewsbury SF Group now feels sufficiently well-established to launch its first clubzine, entitled (for no reason I could force out of instigator Dave Shotton at the Unicorn 2 first night room party) The Gigo Principle; the group itself meets weekly at the Admiral Benbow, Shrewsbury, 8 p.m. in the lounge. Spokesman Dave ("We have only one officer, the secretary; in case you haven't guessed, that's me - we drew lots and I lost") can be reached for further details on Shrewsbury 51131 or at the Warden's House, Moston Green, Meadows Estate, Harlescott.

Meanwhile, the Edinburgh-based F.O.R.T.H. group carried out its threatened publication of RA BRIG 3 (re-titled Hampster Pie for this incarnation), a superb little tour-de-force in bad taste, from the Pete Lyon 'royal wedding' cover through the lead article on ways to occupy yourself in the final four minutes before the Big One drops to the excellent satire on Scotland's SUNDAY POST. Available from Owen Whiteoak (another Unicorn room party victim) for the Usual to 112, Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh; highly recommended.

And just to prove that Edinburgh fandom isn't comprised totally of the Friends of Robert the Hack, a quick plug for the Edinburgh University SF & Fantasy Society, which meets every Thursday in termtime at the David Hume Tower, Edinburgh University ("This is a version of the Arthur C Clarke space elevator which much more usefully only goes as high as the 12th floor where we meet", reports treasurer David MacFarlane). The meetings are very informal, promptly adjourning to the nearby student centre bar; activities include investigations of the aerodynamic potential of ice cubes and an abortive attempt to screen DARK STAR; full details from the society c/o the Societies Centre, 60 The Pleasance, Edinburgh.

STOP PRESS: The Brum Group's informal meetings are now held at the Old Royal in central Birmingham, first Tuesday of each month; the Solihull SF Group has just published the third issue of its newsletter Overmatter and may soon change its venue again (details from yours truly at the address or telephone number below); a science fiction group has just emerged in Darkest Worthing, currently meeting weekly at a member's house but planning to hold film and video evenings in the near future, as well as publish a club fanzine (details from Nick Flynn at the Croft, 26 Cissbury Road, Worthing, or on Worthing 30642); both the Leicester and Exeter groups are planning to hold minicons early next year - more details when available.

Appeals for information on local fandom: Ken Cocks, 99 Limmer Lane, Felpham, Bognor Regis; Norma Dangla, Sarmiento 1616, 1712 Castelar, Princia de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Group contacts are reminded that I'll be available for the usual bribes and blackmail at Novacon 11 (cash, grass or American Express preferred). Alternatively, write me at 11 Fox Green Crescent, Birmingham 27 (day phone: 021 705 8215). Look forward to hearing from you.



DEEP CUTS

Simon Ounsley

This issue: fanzines received up to the end of August.
My address: 13A Cardigan Rd, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3AE
Secret Codes: "the usual" means that a zine is available for trade with other fanzines, a letter of comment, or contribution of written or artistic material. If available for money, the price is given; if not, a sample copy may be available if you write in and ask. Now the page sizes: PC (foolscap) 13" x 8"; A4 11.3/4" x 8.1/4"; Q (quarto) 10" x 8"; A5 8.1/4" x 5.7/8". R means reduced typeface.

Apologies and explanations: Typing out the above makes me feel a bit guilty about all the OCELOTS I haven't sent out to people who've written and asked and others whom I've promised a copy. When I get chance, and if I get some more copies, I'll send them out, or possibly substitute a copy of my forthcoming solo effort (coming real soon now).

No printing method info this time, you'll notice. This is mainly because I keep guessing it wrongly and I don't see that it's very important anyway. If the production's so bad you can scarcely read it, or so good that the editor ought to start producing his own bank notes, then rest assured that I'll mention it.

Now, down to business....

A FOOT IN THE DOOR (Jean Sheward, 15 Hereford Rd, Acton, London W3 and Anne Lewis, 61 Fletcher Rd, Chiswick, London W4; Availability: write in and ask, I imagine; A4; Spp). This is a list of SF fan groups of the kind featured in the LIFE ON MARS column, plus specialist fan groups (Star Trek, Blake's Seven, Prisoner and the ilk). A good idea this but (to be churlish), since 50% of the info, most of which came originally from the LIFE ON MARS column, must have been lifted straight from the fan room wall at Yorkon 2, some mention of either Yorkon 2 or the BSFA would have been a nice gesture I think, perhaps even just common politeness.

ANSIBLE 19 (Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW; 6 for £1 (UK), 5/£1 (Europe), 4/£1 (elsewhere); 8pp, incl. 2 of reduced typeface). Good fanish newsline - subscribe today.

BLATANT 9 (Avedon Carol, 4409 Woodfield Rd, Kensington, Maryland, 20795, USA; For the usual or \$1.50; USQ; 12pp). Less of Avedon this time; she mainly appears between the short extracts of letters, but there are two long outside contributions: Helen Berrotoni writing in a style which is rather too self-consciously apocalyptic for my taste about "why the Reagan movie is bad art" and Ted White (of FANTASTIC and AMAZING fame) doing a few thoughtful fanzine reviews. Ted wants to see more fanzines, so it might be interesting to send him some. He lives at 1014 N Tuckahoe St, Falls Church, VA 22046, USA.

It's interesting to read what Ted thinks of present-day fandom: "if a random survey of the typical large-convention audience gives an indication, many people who call themselves 'fans' are worshipful and adoring of sf authors, abasing themselves before their idols as worthless, non-creative, passive consumers", whereas "The fandom in which I grew up did not worship its pros... our love for sf was not uncritical".

Good grief! Is this just arrogance or is there some truth in it all? Ted seems to be talking about today's fans as though they are all media fans. Does this mean that there isn't the same separation in the US between the media and science fiction fans that we have in this country? Over there, is there no hard-core HTP faction that uses Heinlein and Asimov for toilet paper? Is there no remnant of the kind of fandom that Ted grew up in?

I think he's probably just being myopic, like he was at Season, when a group of us were gathered drunkenly outside

the SPWA suite singing Astral League songs, throwing beer at the elitist sign saying SPWA MEMBERS AND GUESTS ONLY, glaring at Larry Niven and Marion Zimmer Bradley. Ted White barged past and made some comment about not being able to get to the toilet for all the bloody nees around. He was apparently under the impression that we were adoring young fans, hoping for a glimpse of Jackie Lichtenberg's armpit or something, whereas in fact all we wanted to do was to kick Jerry Pournelle up the arse or spill beer over Larry Niven. You got it wrong, Ted.

Ted's comments got me thinking though. Certainly, there is an uncritical element in fandom as a whole: the kind of people who gather in an adoring circle around Anne McCaffrey at Star Trek cons, for instance, but just how widespread is this attitude? And do such people even produce fanzines?

Some of the zines I've received do come from the element who seem to disapprove of the BSFA reviewers' rather hard-line approach, so it might be interesting as we go along to examine just how uncritical and adoring such people are. Do people who like, say, THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST, really have an uncritical attitude to everything else? Perhaps we shall see.

Anyway, before we move on (and see about dropping this royal plural which seems to have crept in) I'll just mention that BLATANT is a pretty good fanzine. Onwards....

DRAGONBURST (Christina Lake, 69 Leamington Rd, Southend-On-Sea, Essex SS1 2SW. For the usual; A4; 20pp). Given the title and the fact that the cover bears a childish picture of a dragon, I have no hesitation in stating that this fanzine is better than it looks. Christina says "...what's wrong with DRAGONBURST (as a name) apart from sounding sub-McCaffreyish, uninventive and nauseating?" Well nothing at all Christina but, ahem, isn't that enough? Christina slates Alan Dorey and Joseph Nicholas for being "dogmatic about what a fanzine should be", and I tend to support her, but then she accuses them of centering their criticism on the printing method and layout, which as far as I know has never been the case. "Presentation isn't important" says Christina. I'd just argue that presentation is important insofar as it assists communication. The fact is that with a poky cover and name like this, I would never have read the zine in a million years if I hadn't felt obliged to do so because I'm reviewing it. Where does it get you if you produce a good readable fanzine that looks so terrible that no one would want to pick it up?

Anyway, on to what Christina thinks are important: the contents. Here I was looking for the kind of uncritical attitude that Ted White was talking about (see the review for BLATANT if you're not reading the whole article) and found it on MARVIN'S PROBLEM PAGE. Bloody hell, here we are: someone called Jan Sorensen has lifted Marvin the Paranoid Android lock stock and barrel from HITCH-HIKERS and placed him in the guise of Marjorie Proops. Ho, ho, really funny; one feeble joke that isn't even really in's stretched out to a page and a half. Fanzines are supposed to be creative; taking things you've seen on TV and regurgitating them with nothing of your own to add just isn't. And not only is PROBLEM PAGE unoriginal, it isn't even remotely funny. This sort of thing makes me puke up my diodes.

Two more fairly horrid things (before we get on to the better bits): the first is a real letters page. This being the second printing of DRAGONBURST, Christina has been able to include some locs on this very issue. Unfortunately, 80% of them seem to disappear up their own arse in a remarkably similar manner. "Does it matter?" they say, "does it matter that it matters?" Did Christina have to print them? And did she also have to print a rather long short story written by her brother in his formative years? There is an argument that printing bad fiction like this in some way helps the writer (since it can't possibly do anything for the reader) but is that still the case with something written, as I gather, quite a long time ago? Wouldn't it be better, if anything has to be included, to use a more recent work? Surely Simon must have improved in the intervening years.

All right, enough of the gripes. This leaves us with some reasonable stuff: Christina writing about BATMAN comics, with much enthusiasm but with critical faculties intact ("Batman has this pathological desire to go out every night and beat up criminals"), and, very wittily, about Eleanor of Aquitaine ("the only woman in twelfth century society"). And finally there's quite a good fanzine piece, preparing us for the threatened Eurocon, providing translations of useful phrases such as "What was his name again, that guy I was drinking vodka with last night?"

Christina's own pieces, then, apart from the rambling, ill-conceived editorial, are promising. Get rid of Marvin and the fiction and this could be a good zine. One more thing: Christina should stop worrying about the inflexibility of fanzine attitudes. Alan and Joseph aren't writing reviews any more.

DRIFTING SOUL 1 (Mike Hamilton, 38 Park Way, Etwell, Derbyshire, DE6 6HU. For the usual, I assume; Q: 8pp). Well at least Mike's found a good name at last. **FAN EXITED FROM TYNE ZINE** didn't have much of a ring to it, did it? Unfortunately, very little else has changed. Mike fills up most of the zine with short snippets apparently written straight off the top of his head which are probably intended to give an exciting "live transmission... just as it happens" sort of feel. Instead they read like desperate attempts to fill up the pages. The worst of them are the attempts at avant-garde: "Texaco going to sell the ship. No. Go to Pembroke. For Cargo. No. Waiting. Waiting. Go to Rotterdam. Cargo. No. Second Engineer says cargo tomorrow. No." etc. etc. This sort of writing is difficult to pull off successfully. Mike doesn't.

The best thing here is Mike's attempt to actually sit down and write a proper article, this about superstition on board ship. There must be quite a lot of fanzine material in Mike's job (sailing round the coast on a cargo vessel) so I'd like to see some more attempts at a more formal approach. I think it would work better.

Also, some more planning would be a good idea. After an issue consisting mainly of fillers, he says he's got lots more interesting letters but no room to print them. This is annoying, since we're only treated to a snippet of a letter about bringing a dead cat home from the vet's: "not only did J-P's rigid legs keep popping out, but the bottom of the sack began to tear open". Bloody hell. If I had a letter as tasteless as that, I'd make sure I printed it in full.

DUMMY PRESS (A package of six fanzines: **RAGNORAK 3** (approx 22pp), **RAGNORAK 4** (5pp), **OUTSIDE BROADCAST 6** (10pp), **OVERDROWNED 2** (26pp), **OVERBLOWN 3** (1p), and **LIBERATED CRABS** (18pp); available from John Shire at 'Ponderosa', Church St, Merriott, Somerset for approx £1 in 14p stamps; all from the now defunct 'Dummy Press'; all A4).

This massive package approximates to the output of Dummy Press over the last year and is sent out to those who've missed out on their products before **RAGNORAK** and **OUTSIDE BROADCAST** are edited by John Shire, **OVERDROWNED** and **OVERBLOWN** by Mike Paine, **LIBERATED CRABS** is a joint production from the above two plus Allen Boyd-Newton.

Bloody hell. That Dummy Press should send out a massive glut of print like this with no concern for the affects of culture shock is typical of their attitude, I think. The earlier zines here are hulking wads of stuff, mainly written straight out of the editors' heads it seems, with prose and layout that is messy and anarchic. The later ones are much the same but slimmer and desperate in tone. Since its arrival, the bundle has been lying festering on the floor. The production, as I say, is messy and unappealing, and there is so much of it... but last night, Friday night, with the deadline looming, I stayed in, forsaking even the West Riding meeting, and actually got down to reading it. I read all of it. Bloody hell.

The whole package reads like some desperate but ultimately unsuccessful attempt at communication, not necessarily with the people the zines are sent out to, more with some ill-defined alien entity, possibly inside the editors' heads. A typical piece from the earlier zines is John Shire's

Outside Broadcast 3, which is part of **LIBERATED CRABS** (the names and number sequences all fit together in a tortuously complicated but accurate way; each zine also has a Dummy Press publication number. Sometimes this leads one to think that getting the zines in the right order is more important in the editors' heads than the stuff that actually goes into them). **Outside Broadcast 3** is basically about how awful the state of the world is, but it reads not so much like an article as the mutterings of someone who's tossing and turning in the middle of a nightmare. There's no clear thought or planning behind the piece. In the later **OUTSIDE BROADCAST 6**, John reviews Cyril Simsa's **A NEW OPTIMISM FOR THE EIGHTIES**, something else which set out to make a statement about the state of the world. "It becomes even worse" says John, "when it takes someone to point it out for you because you haven't had your head out of the sand for long enough to realise it for yourself" which is quite a compliment to Cyril. I think because the very essence of good art is to point something out to you that you should have been able to see for yourself. And Cyril succeeded because he thought about what he was doing, chose a string of quotations, and arranged them together in order to get the best effect. Fanzine writing takes thought and planning, something which never seems to have occurred to the folks at Dummy Press.

They do spend a lot of time on design and layout however, but this effort seems to be inversely proportional to any pleasing effect it might be expected to produce. "...fanned seem to be currently complacent", writes John Shire in **RAGNORAK 3**, "expecting anyone who receives a fanzine will feel so honoured he'll gladly lose his sight over closely typed pages which often resemble a diving sabre more than any sort of fanzine", a clear, perceptive statement which comes as quite a surprise. The only trouble is that Dummy Press produces more diving sabres than anybody else, as far as I know. Why can't they see this? Maybe Cyril Simsa could explain it to them in a fanzine.

Mike Paine, unlike John, does seem to some extent aware of the effect his artwork is having. What he's trying to do with **OVERDROWNED 2** is to produce the sort of effect which Andy Darlington achieved successfully with the recent edition of **LUDD'S MILL**. Even **OVERDROWNED** does have a certain tidy style to it, which is perhaps the effect that Mike actually wanted, who knows? The trouble is that the written contents are so utterly hopeless, concerned totally with the subject of fanzine production with particular reference to **OVERDROWNED** itself. How incestuous can you get? Mike and John complain about other zines being "limited" in subject matter and say they want to produce something original, but all they seem to succeed in doing is to disappear up their own arses. It's typical of Dummy Press that in **RAGNORAK 4**, when John announces that Dummy is folding, he doesn't explain why. Even to the end, they seem determined not to actually communicate. But there it is then. That was that. Dummy Press puked up and then left, leaving hardly anything in its publications that's actually worth reading. There's a spark of insight on page 23 of **OVERDROWNED** however: "Surely one should approach each fanzine with the aim of looking for whatever is of value in it, and to then assess its strong points compared to its weaknesses - rather than checking up on whether it conforms to some fixed model of what fanzines ought to be." Right on, as they say. But that's written not by Mike or John but by one Cyril Simsa and it's not much to get out of a twenty-six page giant hulk of a fanzine.

Still, Cyril's idea of fanzine reviewing above is very much in line with my own. So here's where I look for the good points in Dummy Press. I've already dismissed the zines, of course, as containing hardly anything of value for the reader. They are like somebody muttering in his sleep, or like a sharp burst of static from a loudspeaker... Perhaps before we hear something coherent from it? Perhaps they were just clearing their throats? Hell, I don't know. But I get the impression that although Dummy is dead, for whatever reason, John and Mike will continue to produce stuff and maybe, this time, they'll have something to say and take the trouble to think about how they should say it. **RAGNORAK 4** read a lot better than **RAGNORAK 3**, and perhaps Mike Paine will find something other than his own bloody fanzine to talk about. The fanzine medium is still there for them to use if they want to, and I wouldn't want to be the one

to discourage them.

My favourite piece out of these six zines is a short piece of what might perhaps be described (though not very accurately) as fiction in John Shire's OUTSIDE BROADCAST 6. It seems to sum up the Dummy phenomenon quite brilliantly, and offers hope for the future. A guy is sitting down to write: "... he wrote the first two words that came into his head. These would be the overall title. o-u-t-s-i-d-e b-r-o-a-d-c-a-s-t appeared on the sheet in front of him. God, he thought, I'll have to do better than that. The pen began again".

FANZINE DIRECTORY 3 (Allan Beatty, PO Box 1906, Ames, IA 50010, USA. Price \$1 (USA, Australia), \$1.15 (Canada), 60p or 5 International Reply Coupons. £1 or 8 IRCs for overseas airmail. Also for trade. Cheques and stamps are accepted; US\$; R; 14pp). This is what appears to be a very copious listing of all the fanzines produced in 1977. Since I wasn't around in fandom at that time, I found some of the entries quite interesting, like Rich Coad's SPICY RAT TAILS and Dave Bridges' DEE DROPS IN filed under misc., not to mention D West's SCAB TREK: "Parody of Star Trek" Allan ventures. I wonder. Let Allan know if you want your zine listing when he gets to 1981. You can show it to your grand-children.

FANZINE FANATIQUE 40, 41, 42 and PLAY IT AGAIN (Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St, Greaves, Lancaster, Lancs, LA1 4UF. FF is available for (preferably) the usual or 3 for £1, 6 for £1 but no cheques or Pos. Send SAE for sample. A4; the zines have 4pp each). The return of the copious but untidy Mr Walker. FANZINE FANATIQUE contains mainly short fanzine reviews; PLAY IT AGAIN covers Keith's new hobby of collecting old radio show recordings, plus a review of the ERG tape, and advice on sending tapes through the post. Keith is starting up a tape APA, so let him know if you're interested.

HAMSTER PIE 3 (latest incarnation of the Edinburgh group-zine. Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat (left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh EH11 1LH and John Dawson, 4/7 New John Place, Edinburgh; for the usual; A5; R; 36pp). Timed with admirable precision to arrive the day before the Royal Wedding, the zine's wonderfully irrelevant Pete Lyon cover cheered me up on dead (Charles as Mister Spock, Diana with tentacles, all good stuff). Hell, there's some real rubbish in the zine but I must confess that I like the bloody thing. It still manages to hang on to being the best club-zine around; I know that's not a compliment but it's the best that I can do. The format is great, with lots of excellent Pete Lyon artwork and plenty of very short articles on an immensely wide range of subjects. Of course if it wasn't a club effort, this sort of production wouldn't be possible, so what can you say? You just have to take the rough with the smooth. Not all of the contributors can actually write very well, so like all clubzines there's a lot of rubbish to wade through. I quite liked FEAR AND LOATHING IN PORTFOLIO but the real goodie this time is TURN ON, TUNE IN, DROP DEAD, which is as good a fanzine article as I've seen anywhere, all about how to pass the time while you're waiting for the bomb to drop. Is Captain Black a pen-name for Owen Whiteoak, I wonder? If not, then there are two excellent writers in Edinburgh.

All in all, a very good result, since they haven't taken the classic Pickersgill advice before they started publishing i.e. looked around to see what else was going on. "What is fanzine writing?" asks the editorial presence in reply to my loc. Well, TURN ON... is one manifestation. Other examples can be found in some of the zines described in this article. Try writing off for some.

ICOGAHERON (M J Sheaman, 25 Scott St, Dundee; "for the usual, two pins, or personal whim - no one is safe!"; A4; 10pp). Another zine with a dragon on the cover, and yet again an attack on the more personal fanzine type of writing in the editorial. Bloody hell. Moira says that "I can't see that people who have never heard of me will be interested as I discuss 'the small doings of my fathers, grand-fathers and great-grand-fathers, and remoter cousins to the ninth degree'". Why, then, should we be interested in your reading habits either, Moira? And why, after all, can't a fanzine be a means of getting to know someone? Personally, I might well find the small doings of your

father more interesting than your views on Marion Zimmer Bradley. If I want to find out about fantasy fiction, I can go to much more erudite and reliable sources than your good self.

Anyway, I'm not trying to tell Moira (or anyone else) that she should produce a type of zine any different to the one she wants to produce. I'm just trying to point out that her attack on fanzine writing has no logical basis whatsoever. As to the zine that she has produced: there's no sign, once again, of Ted White's famous "uncritical attitude". Moira praises Katherine Kurtz but knocks MGB and there are some nice jibes at Anne McCaffrey and the flood of Tolkien-related material. J R R Tolkien's Shopping Lists (ed. C Tolkien) as "advertised".

All in all, it's a thoughtful, unpretentious zine, though not my cup of tea at all. I'm hankering to know what those ninth cousins got up to.

OVERMATTER 2 (The newzine of the Solihull SF Group from Steve Green, 11 Fox Green Cres, Acocks Green, Birmingham 27; available for return postage etc; A4; 4pp). Quite an enterprising news-sheet with the first part of an article by Garry Kilworth, news of meetings and cons, some sharp capsule book reviews by Steve, and a short report on the Brum Group anniversary.

PECKHAM WRITERS GROUP NEWSLETTER 3 (No address given but I got mine from Ken Mann, 22 Pennethorne Rd, London SE15 5TQ; A4; 8pp). If this stuff is worth distributing, it would have been a good idea to align the photo-copier correctly to start with, to make it easier to read. Whether it is worth distributing is debatable itself - the material varies mainly from over-flowery to downright awful, though there's some fairly good poetry by a guy called Ian R Davey. It isn't really a newsletter, you will probably have gleaned, but chiefly a medium for the group's writing. According to the attached blurb "one function/aim of the Group is help provide a fertile environment in which the budding writer can cultivate his activities". So maybe this really helps. If you're interested, get in touch with Ken.

PERIPHERY 5 (Jeff Suter, 18 Norton Close, Southwick Fareham, Hants, PO17 6BD; for the usual or 20p in stamps; A4; 20pp). Primarily through frequency of publication during last year and frequent references to Joseph Nicholas, the amiable Mr Suter seems to have made his mark upon the collective fanzine consciousness. And this is despite the fact that Jeff seems to have nothing particularly original to say and no great skill in saying it in any case. Taking two articles in this issue, for instance: one deals with the commercialisation of Christmas, which everyone must surely have noticed for themselves; the other with the TV documentary LIFE FOR CHRISTINE. Here, Jeff merely reiterates the views put forward in the programme, which is only useful if there's anyone reading who managed to avoid seeing both the programme and all the newspaper reports that followed it.

Still, it's impossible to deny that Jeff has achieved a certain degree of success with PERIPHERY, as evidenced by the fairly lively letter column that's developed. Jeff is one step ahead of, say, Dummy Press, in that he has thought out what he wants to say and does his best to communicate it. The zine is friendly and unpretentious and obviously filling some sort of need in fandom. I find it crushingly boring, but good luck to him in any case.

Other stuff in this issue: a NOVACON report, Jeff on the joys of autumn, a fanzine listing and a book review.

SAMEAN 1 (Written and edited by Sorn (Sam) and Zander Wyndon. Second printing available shortly for 50p plus 30p pap from Ken Mann at 22 Pennethorne Rd, London SE15 5TQ; A4; 70pp). A well-produced collection of short stories by, I understand, a group of media fans, based on characters developed in role-playing games and such-like. It's light space opera and fairly competently written - I've seen worse stuff done professionally by certain infamous publishing houses. Ken Mann tells me it's full of clever jokes for people who are in the group and widely read and intelligent and such-like. Needless to say, I didn't discover any of them. Anyway, if you

like space opera, why not give this a try?

SIKANER 5 (Irwin Hirsch, 279 Domain Rd, South Yarra, Victoria 3141, Australia. For the usual, old fanzines, or \$1; Q: 22pp). Good articles by John Berry (on a frightening plane trip) and David Grigg (on trying out an educational game in a tough school) plus a rather monotonous one by John Bangsund about devaluing the Kilometre (perhaps it would have helped if I knew something about Australian politics, perhaps not). Plus lots of letters and an editorial by Irwin about his film-making studies (bloody hell! Must be nice to be able to study something that's actually interesting, and he hopes to get a job as a director afterwards! Good luck to him, the lucky bastard).

STOP BREAKING DOWN 7 (Greg Pickersgill, 7A Lawrence Rd, South Ealing, London W5; for the usual, show of interest, or 30p in stamps; Q: 28pp).

TAPPEN 1 (Malcolm Edwards, 28 Duckett Rd, London N4 1BN; "available because I sent it to you, and for no other reason" says Malcolm. Elistit bastard. You could always try writing in; Q: 34pp).

THE CHOCOLATES OF LUST (Phil Palmer, 3 Longlands Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA15 7NJ; probably available for the usual; A4: 14pp).

Pretty convenient, these three coming together in the alphabet, because I wanted to talk about them together in any case. I'll actually start with TAPPEN, because that arrived first. According to Phil Palmer in his fanzine (not confusing you, am I?), "... quite a number of people think that TAPPEN is the best thing to have emerged since SEACON, when, as we're repeatedly told, the art of fanzine publishing died". This is a view not shared by Phil himself, I should add. Interesting, because if that's the general view down south, it seems to be diametrically opposed to the consensus up here in Leeds, where most people seem to be of the same mind as Phil himself, and found it pretty boring. In great case, I was the odd one out. "I thought it was this," I said, facing the incredulous stares of West and Collick, "it had me rolling around on the floor laughing". And indeed it did. Mind you, I had just got back from the One Tun at the time and was pissed out of my mind, so that might have influenced my attitude.

So where does all that leave us? Well, in the case of new readers, probably in a state of confusion. I'd better start at the beginning.

Malcolm Edwards, along with Greg Pickersgill, Roy Kettle and a few others was part of something called Ratfand, a group which revolutionised fanzine writing in the early seventies, long before you or I were alive. They introduced a lively shit-kicking style of writing which shocked the rather staid establishment of the time. What eventually happened, of course, was that by the time Greg Pickersgill published his last issue of **STOP BREAKING DOWN** in early 1978, they had actually become the establishment, a situation which has only been reinforced by their lack of activity every since, because people keep reminiscing wistfully about the golden age of the early seventies. In the meantime, particularly since Seacon, all the other people who were producing fanzines at the time of **STOP BREAKING DOWN** have done so with reduced frequency and, it often seems, reduced enthusiasm, leaving the way for a whole new set of people to come up, with their own ideas of what should go into a fanzine. This has produced a fanzine publishing scene which is generally low on quality but high on the sheer scope of material involved. The new fanzines have generally been bad but they've been showing signs of slowly, painfully, getting better. Now here's Edwards back on the scene again. "Competence at last!" cry the old mob - "Turning the clock back!" cry the new. We seem to have a clash of cultures, or perhaps it's a generation-gap.

OK, so there we are. The above summary is not supposed to be any kind of definitive potted history of the last ten years, just an attempt to explain to anyone who doesn't know, something of the significance of TAPPEN.

So what of it, anyway? Whatever its significance, is it good or bad?

The answer, as far as I'm concerned, is that it's not a bad fanzine and neither is it brilliant. But it is good, and it's certainly one of the best fanzines to come out this year. Malcolm should be complimented for getting off his arse and doing it, and I'm looking forward to future issues. (Or if I've missed out by not attending Seacon, then you know what you can do with your poxy little zine, Edwards.)

Most people's reactions to TAPPEN seem to owe more to their fanzine ideology than the actual quality of the thing. The old guard only think it's brilliant because it comes as such a relief to have something familiar after all those years of Cyril Sims's hypocritism and suchlike; whereas the young punks dislike it because it's not trying anything new. But why should it? They complain about the Joseph Nicholas fixed idea of what a fanzine should be like, but expecting every zine to be innovative and different is really just as much a fixed idea. As Cyril said (see Dummy Press review), every zine should be judged for what it is, not for what it is not. As an attempt to revive the pre-Seacon world of fanzine, TAPPEN is just fine.

So what's in it? Best things first - a great article by Chris Atkinson on Yorcon 2 (difficult to do a good original on report these days, but she's managed it), a pretty good piece by Chris Evans on his job testing suppositories by swallowing them, some hilarious anagrams from Malcolm. What else? A particularly obscure and inaccurate gossip column from Roy Kettle, Malcolm on his origins in fandom and (yawn, yawn) the bloody Hugos, lastly a Desert Island Discs piece by Greg Pickersgill. The latter (with, naturally, different "cast-aways") is to be a regular feature of TAPPEN. I think this is a terrible idea. As a fan room programme item, where you could actually hear the music, it might be fine, but here it's just boring. Greg doesn't even follow the radio show format and talk about the memories connected with each piece, he just tries to describe the music and succeeds only in being tedious. With this sort of start to his return to fanzine writing, I was beginning to dread the arrival of Greg's new fanzine. Luckily, I needn't have worried.

With a single bound, **STOP BREAKING DOWN 7** has re-established Greg as the premier fanzine editor. I just hope he isn't put off by it being so (apparently) effortless. Somehow, he seems to have kept much the same format for the zine but avoided the tendency to make the readers hark back wistfully to the seventies. Like magic, SBD has become very much a fanzine of the eighties already. He's achieved this (whether by design or not, I've no idea), firstly by kicking up as much fanzine shit as possible (suggesting in a single sweep of the pen - you can't expect sensible metaphors this late in the column - the abolition of both the Doc Weir Award and the Transatlantic Fan Fund) and secondly by printing more sexually explicit material than I've seen in a fanzine before. I didn't know you could write about that sort of thing in a fanzine, but apparently you can. Chris Atkinson, who seems to be emerging as the best new fan writer since Michael Ashley, goes into great detail about her sexual fantasies, while Linda Pickersgill contributes a short story using all the rude words which begin with an "a".

Best of the contents - an excellent piece by Linda about her role as Mrs Pickersgill, the housewife bit that is (you could show this bit to your grandmother, though she wouldn't understand); and a piece by Bryn Forsey about his early attempts at writing. All of it's good stuff. I almost forgot the lists which appear throughout the zine. My favourite is the one by Chris Atkinson (yes, her again); "Thirteen Things That Might Come And Get Me", which includes "The arms on tube train seats", "Greenwich foot-tunnel", and "The furry elephant in the spare bedroom".

Now on to Phil Palmer's **THE CHOCOLATES OF LUST**, a welcome new zine from one of the young punks I've been talking

about. As well as a few fanzine reviews I've already mentioned his views on TAPPEN, Phil writes a short piece on the isolationist tendencies of the Cambridge group and a long one about attitudes to and within Scottish fandom. "KNOW YOUR ENEMY" says the title, "IT IS A MISTAKE TO SHOOT YOUR OWN MEN" and Phil manages to take a step back from all the fannish bickering and take a refreshingly objective look at it all. His outlook might be rather too pro-Bob Shaw for many tastes, both outside and inside Glasgow, but it's good to see someone make the attempt to look at things constructively.

Phil also includes a good piece by Nick Lowe about the film DEATH WATCH and the book LANARK, which are both set in his native Glasgow. This doesn't "fit in" with the rest of the issue but what the hell, I think we've got past that sort of quibbling. It's included and it's worthwhile so that seems fair enough.

Phil doesn't seem to like the zine though: "it's ended up just another example of the same old fannish drivel, even using the dreadful chatty style that I swore I'd never touch". Well now you have touched it, Phil, I hope you stick with it, like it or not, because you write it well. This is a well written, intelligent fanzine and I hope to see more, even if you have to be dragged screaming to the duplicator.

STARCHASE (Geoff Boswell, 59 Sorrel Walk, Stour View, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 2QG; for trade or 25p; A4; 12pp). Whoops! Sorry, this should have come before the trio above, but who understands the alphabet anyway? I guess Geoff will forgive me, because I didn't think this zine was as bad as he seemed to think I would. It's primarily a fiction zine and includes above average fanfic from Steve Sneyd, Garry Watton and Paul Higgs. There's also a piece by Chuck Connor, ahem, nothing personal Chuck, honest, despite your rather underhand journalistic technique, but that one's pretty terrible. There's also an article by Andy Darlington on a few pieces of Moorcockiana.

So that's issue one. So far so good. But Geoff says he intends to publish on a regular basis, whether he gets good material or not. So I suppose the quality of future issues lies in the lap of the gods.

TRIPLE ECHO 3 (Steve Roberts and Andrew Briggs, 236 Fletcher Rd, Preston, PR1 5HH, 40p plus postage for one issue, £2.25 for four; A5; R; 40pp). Quite a well-produced zine covering every aspect of sf, from music, through comics and media, even stretching to fiction. Fan fiction is also included. The standard of critical

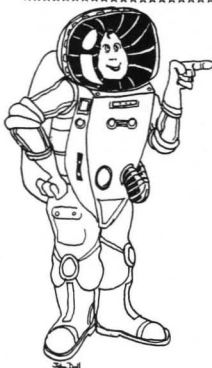
writing is literate though not always astute. For instance, there's an interesting interview with Richard Francis, author of BLACKPOOL VANISHES, which succeeds because Francis is interesting, not because of the questions he's asked, which include "When did you start writing?", "What books have you written?" and "What do you really think about flying saucers?"

SMALL PRESS (which is the section in which I include things that look a bit posher than a fanzine).

FIRST (Tom Abell, 26 Foxhall Rd, Ipswich, IP3 8HL; 50p incl. p&p; A4; 40pp). A well-produced zine that describes itself as "East Anglia's Science Fiction Magazine" although I'd quibble and say that this is primarily a comics mag, even though it does contain a couple of fairly forgettable pieces of very short fiction. I ain't no expert on comics but the stuff seems competent at worst and there's some very evocatively alien art work in a strip called NEUF, plus an interesting humorous idea in CAPTAIN BIPLANE, a strip set in an alternative universe where a "mighty ball of atmosphere" surrounds all the solar planets and the captain flies between them in his World War One aeroplane. There's also an interview with John Nathan-Turner, producer of DOCTOR WHO, but the man isn't asked why the scripts to most of the last series were rendered utterly incomprehensible. He does talk about "Christopher, my ex-script editor" however, so perhaps there's hope.

FOUNDATION 22 (SF Foundation, North East London Polytechnic, Longbridge Rd, Dagenham, RM8 2AS. Editor David Pringle; Subs for 3 issues: £5 (UK and Europe), £12 (surface mail) or £17 (air mail) for US and Canada, £5.50 surface mail elsewhere, £10 air mail to Australia and New Zealand; A5; 108pp). Britain's best SF critical journal. This issue includes a major survey of SF in the seventies by Roz Kavenay, plus other articles and reviews by such as Brian Stableford, M John Harrison, John Clute and Colin Greenland.

THE PATCHIN REVIEW 1 (Edited by Charles Platt at 9 Patchin Place, New York, NY10011, USA. British Agent: David Pringle, 21 The Village Street, Leeds, LS4 2PR; Subs: £5 for 6 (UK), \$12 for 6 (US); USA\$; 36pp). "The unique and controversial guide to science fiction" says the cover, and I get the feeling this is intended to be the SF equivalent to THE NEWS OF THE WORLD. Trouble is, the whole thing would be a lot more interesting if the vast majority of the contributors weren't hiding behind false names. Those who dare to be recognised in this issue include Barry N Malzberg and Harlan Ellison. The zine also contains brief book reviews.



DON'T FORGET

The BSFA meetings at Hammersmith
3rd Friday of every month
Upstairs at The RUTLAND

Special Guest on 20th Nov.

ANGELA CARTER

NEWS

THE HUGO AWARDS - 1981

Due to space constraints, a summary of the more major awards presented at Denvention this August is given below.

NOVEL - The Snow Queen by Joan Vinge
NOVELLA - "Lost Dorsai" by Gordon Dickson
NOVELETTE - "The Sword and Cloak" by Gordon Dickson
SHORT STORY - "Grotto of the Dancing Deer" by Clifford Simak
NON-FICTION BOOK - Cosmos by Carl Sagan
DRAMATIC PRESENTATION - The Empire Strikes Back
PRO EDITOR - Ed Ferman
PRO ARTIST - Michael Whalen
FAN WRITER - Susan Wood
FANZINE - Locus
FAN ARTIST - Victoria Poyser

MAGAZINES

70 year-old Arthur Bernhard plans to retire in 1982 and is looking for someone to buy his publishing control of *Amazing Stories*. Any of you wishing to take over from him should contact Mr Bernhard c/o Ultimate Publishing Co, Box 642, Scottsdale AZ 85222, USA

Galaxy, may be resurrected and recommence publishing by a local Boston group who may buy the magazine.

Galileo's poor performance has resulted in a law suit and countersuit. Dell is suing Vincent McCaffrey to get back their distribution advantage for the four issues they handled which sold very poorly; McCaffrey is countersuing on the grounds that Dell did such a poor job they caused the poor sales figures.

BOOKS

1. Just Published

ANDERSON, Poul: 4 Flandry books in boxed set (Ace);
 The Corridors of Time (Berkley)
 BOYER, Elizabeth: The Elves and the Otter-Skin (Del Rey)
 CARTER, Lin: Darya of the Bronze Age (Daw)
 CHANDLER, A. Bertram: special promotion by Ace of The Road to the Rim/ The Hard Way Up, The Inheritors/ Gateway to Never, The Rim Gods/ The Dark Dimensions, Into The Alternate Universe/ Contraband from Otherspace, The Rim of Space/ The Ship from Outside, The Commodore at Sea/ Spartan Planet.
 The Anarch Lords (Daw)
 COULSON, Juanita: Tomorrow's Heritage (Del Rey)
 DICK, Philip K: Now Wait for Last Year (Daw)
 DICKSON, Gordon R: 3 Dorsai Books in boxed set (Ace)
 FARMER, Philip Jose: Behind the Walls of Terra (World of Tiers #4) (Ace), 5 World of Tiers books in boxed set (Ace), The Unreasoning Mask (Berkley).
 GARNER, Alan: The Weirdestone of Brisingamen (Del Rey), The Moon of Gomrath (Del Rey)
 GARRETT, Randall: Lord Darcy Investigates (Ace), Murder and Magic (Ace), Too Many Magicians (Ace).
 HOWARD, Robert E: Conan Books #9 - #12 in boxed set (Ace).
 LEE, Tanith: Delusion's Master (Daw), Night's Master (Daw)
 LEIGH, Steven: Slow Fall to Dawn (Bantam)
 LYNN, Elizabeth A: The Woman who Loved the Moon and Other Tales (Berkley).
 McDONALD, Steven E: Janus Syndrome (Bantam)
 NIVEN, Larry (Ed): The Magic May Return (Ace Trade Paperback)
 NORTON, Andre: The Stars Are Ours (Ace)
 SABERHAGEN, Fred: The Mask of the Sun (Ace), 4 Berserker Books in boxed set (Ace)
 SCOTT CARD, Orson (Ed): Dragons of Darkness (Ace trade paperback).
 SMITH, E E "Doc" & Gordon Eklund: Lord Tedric III: Black Night of the Iron Sphere (Ace)
 STINE, G Harry: Space Power (Ace).
 WHITE James: Deadly Litter (Del Rey).
 WINDLING, Terry & Mark Arnold (Eds): Elsewhere (an illustrated book from Ace)
 WOLFE, Gene: The Fifth Head of Cerberus (Ace)

2. Out Real Soon Now

October

ASPRIN, Robert Lynn (Ed): Thieves' World (Ace) and its

second sequel - Shadows of Sanctuary - also by Ace.
 BROWN, Frederic: Martians Go Home (Del Rey)
 BURROUGHS, Edgar Rice: Special promotion by Ace of Carson of Venus, Escape on Venus, Lost on Venus, Pirates of Venus and The Wizard of Venus/Pirate Blood.
 CHALKER, Jack L: Lilith (Del Rey).
 DEXTER, Susan: The Ring of Allaire (Del Rey).
 DICKSON, Gordon R: Lost Dorsai (Ace illustrated mass market edition).
 EFFINGER, George Alec: The Wolves of Memory (Berkley/Putnam).
 GEROLD, David: Space Skinner (Del Rey).
 GILLILAND, Alexis A: Long Shot for Rosinante (Del Rey).
 HERBERT, Frank: Direct Descent (Ace)
 McENROE, Richard: Warrior's World (third sequel to Armageddon 2419 AD) [Ace].
 McQUAY, Mike: Mathew Swain: When Trouble Beckons (Bantam).
 O'DONNELL, Kevin Jr: Reefs: The Journeys of McGill Feighan, Book II (Berkley).
 PRATT, Fletcher: The Blue Star (Del Rey).
 ROBINSON, Frank: A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... (Collection published by Bantam)
 RUCKER, Rudy: Spacecase Donuts (Ace)
 SABERHAGEN, Fred: An Old Friend of the Family (Ace).
 SERVICE, William, William Sout & Byron Preiss: Dinosaurs (Bantam).
 SIMAK, Clifford: City (Ace).
 VAN SCYOC, Sydney J: Sunwails (Berkley).
 WREN, M K: House of the Wolf (Berkley).
 ZELAZNY, Robert: The Dream Master (Ace).
 ZIMMER BRADLEY, Marion: Survey Ship (Ace), Sharra's Exile (A new Darkover novel) [Daw].

November

ANDERSON, Poul: The Nightface (Ace), The Broken Sword (Del Rey)
 BENFORD, Gregory and Grodon Eklund: If The Stars Are Gods (Ace).
 CHARLES, Robert: Flowers of Evil (Bantam).
 CLEMENT, Hal: Iceworld (Del Rey).
 FERMAN, Edward (Ed): The Best From Fantasy & Science Fiction (Ace).
 JARNER, Alan: Red Shift (Del Rey).
 GRANT, Charles L: A Glow of Candles and Other Stories (Berkley).
 GRIFFIN, Russel: Century's End (Bantam).
 KURTZ, Katherine: Camber The Heretic (Del Rey).
 LE GUIN, Ursula K: The Word for World is Forest (Berkley).
 MONACO, Richard: The Final Quest (Berkley)
 NORMAN, John: Guardsman of Gor (Daw).
 NORTON, Andre: Sargasso of Space (Ace).
 SCHMIDT, Dennis: Satori (Ace), Way-Farer (Ace), Kencho (Ace).
 SCHMITZ, James: The Witches of Karres (Ace).
 TAYLOR, Keith: Bard (Ace).
 VANCE, Jack: The Dog Town Tourist Agency (Ace).
 WRIGHTSON, Patricia: The Ice is Coming (Del Rey).
 YARBRO, Chelsea Quinn: Time of the Fourth Horseman (Ace).

3. The Long Term

LYNN ABBEY has sold the third book in her fantasy series to Ace.
 GREGORY BENFORD has sold his "Stargate" trilogy to Timescape Books. The package consists of *In The Ocean Of The Night* (already published by Dial in 1977), *Across The Sea of Suns* (unpublished) and *Stargate* (unpublished).
 A fourth book, *The Stars in Shroud* (Berkley/Putnam 1978), a rewritten version of *Deeper Than The Darkness* (Ace 1970) uses the same universal background but is not considered as part of the series.
 ARTHUR C CLARKE has sold his yet-unfinished sequel to *2001: A Space Odyssey* to Del Rey. Entitled *2010: Odyssey Two*, it will be published in hardcover possibly in November 1982.
 HARLAN ELLISON Ace have cancelled their contract for *Blood's A Rover* which was originally scheduled for October 1980 because of non-deliver of the manuscript.
 ROBERT HEINLEIN has sold his new novel *Friday* (a mere 131,000 words) to Fawcett Books. It is due out in early summer 1982, probably at the same time as their mass market edition of *The Number of The Beast*.

Thanks for news items go to:

Joseph Nicholas
 Locus Issue #248, Vol.14 No.8 (Charles N Brown)
 Pong 23 (Dan Steffan & Ted White)